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PROCEEDINGS
OF
THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY.

1846-7.

No. 63.

March 16th, 1847. (Stated Meeting.)

REV. HUMPHREY LLOYD, D. D., President, in the
Chair.

The Secretary of the Academy read the following Report :

The Council, on the expiration of their year of office, are happy to be able to express their satisfaction at the continued prosperity of the Academy.

During the past year the first part of the twenty-first volume of the Transactions has been published, containing some valuable papers in the departments of Science and Polite Literature. The second Part is in the press, and is considerably advanced.

The Proceedings have been published with great regularity. The Council are happy to be able to state, that the strict enforcement of the rule which requires a complete abstract of each paper to be furnished before leave to read it can be obtained, has enabled the Secretary of Council to bring out the Proceedings after each meeting without delay. It would be unjust, however, to that gentleman, not to admit, that this success is also very much due to the zealous manner in which he has carried out the intention and spirit of the regulation, as well as to the willing co-operation he has received from the authors of papers.

The Proceedings, therefore, being now in the hands of all Members up to the present date, render unnecessary any minute recapitulation of what has occurred at our public meetings; it must suffice to observe, that there has been no lack of important and valuable communications in any of the three departments of the Academy's labours.

The formation of a Museum of Irish Antiquities is an object to which the attention of the Academy has been directed for the last seven years; and the Council have great pleasure in being able to report, that, during the past year, this important department has not been neglected. The value of such a Museum is now recognised by every Member of the Academy, and continues to be regarded with great interest by the public.

The Council are most anxious that the Museum should be thrown open to public inspection as fully as is consistent with its safe preservation. But they are impeded in this desire by the narrow accommodation afforded by our present rooms, and also still more by want of funds; for it is obvious that a greatly increased staff of attendants would be necessary if the public were admitted to the Museum as fully as is desirable. For these reasons, admissions have hitherto been restricted to parties accompanied by Members, or bearing their orders, although it is the wish of the Council that no respectable person who applies for admission should be excluded.

The Museum, as is well known, is deeply indebted to the liberality of Members, and other friends, who have, from time to time, by private subscription, raised large funds for the purchase of antiquities. About £800 have also been contributed in various sums at different periods, during the last seven years, from the funds of the Academy, for the promotion of this object, and donations of antiquities of great interest and value have been, from time to time, received. It would be very desirable that a full and exact account of all these purchases and donations should be placed on record; and the Council would, therefore, strongly recommend it to their successors to have a brief historical account of the formation of the Museum drawn up, and presented in the form of a Report to the Academy.

During the past year a subscription has been set on foot for the purchase of the Domhnach Airgid, a most interesting relic, whose history is well known to the Academy from Mr. Petrie's paper, which has appeared in our Transactions. The purchase-money agreed upon was £300, and the sum of £285 7s., including £50 subscribed by the Academy, has already been received, leaving a balance of about £15 (exclusive of some costs for printing, &c.), which, it is hoped, will without difficulty be collected.

During the past year very little progress has been made in the Catalogue of the Museum, which must necessarily be a work of time, and of considerable expense; but the Pictorial Catalogue has been continued, and every article added to the Museum has been drawn as it was obtained, so that the Academy will at all times possess the means of ascertaining the identity of every thing that now forms a part of the Collection.

Some few articles of interest and value have been purchased and added to the Museum during the past year, at a cost to the Academy of £22 in all. Several donations have also been received, which have been acknowledged from time to time in the Proceedings, and it is, therefore, unnecessary to give a list of them here.

Next to the donors who have presented to the Museum articles of interest and value, the thanks of the Academy are due to those who have deposited there, for the inspection of the Members and of the public, such valuable relics as they do not wish to part with. It will be in the recollection of the Academy that, some time ago, Sir Richard O'Donnell deposited in the Museum, under the safe keeping of the Academy, the Cathach of St. Columbkille, and Dr. William Stokes deposited the Fiachall Phadruig.

During the past year the Rev. Francis Brownlow has deposited, in the same way, the celebrated Book of Armagh, a manuscript of great antiquity, and of the utmost importance to the ancient Church History of Ireland.

The Council would beg leave to call the attention of the Academy, and of the public generally, to the example set by these gentlemen. Those who are in possession of such relics of antiquity, by depositing them in the safe keeping of the Academy, retain the full power of recalling them whenever they think fit, whilst, at the

same time, they give an opportunity to those who are best qualified, of discussing and investigating their claims to antiquity; and thus, in the end, the value of these curious relics is greatly enhanced, by the light that is thus thrown on their history, and the additional evidence that is collected in confirmation of their genuineness.

The sum expended on additions to the Library during the past year has necessarily been very small. The funds of the Academy are so nearly absorbed in the unavoidable expenses of the House and Officers, and in the publication of our Transactions and Proceedings, that the expenses of binding, together with the annual subscription to periodical publications, generally exhaust almost all that can be spared for the support of the Library.

The Library, however, has received several valuable donations during the past year, which have been acknowledged from time to time in the Proceedings.

We have also added the following to the list of Societies with whom we are to exchange Transactions :

1. The Society of Zurich.
2. The Society of Agriculture, Lyons.
3. Academia della Crusca of Florence.
4. Société des Sciences Naturelles du Canton de Vaud.
5. The Imperial Observatory, Pulkova.
6. L'Institut Royal des Pays Bas, Amsterdam.
7. The Library of the Museum of Economic Geology, London.

No changes have been made during the past year in the by-laws or rules for the management of the affairs of the Academy, except in the mode of electing Honorary Members. It was found that some inconvenience was experienced from the vagueness of the former rules, and that a somewhat too great facility was given by them for the admission of Honorary Members; and, as this tended to the injury of the Academy, by diminishing the value of that distinction, the Council submitted to the Academy the regulations which received your approbation on the 11th of January last, and which will be found in the Proceedings under that date. The principle of these new regulations, which, it is hoped, will prove satisfactory in practice, is twofold : first, to limit the number of Honorary

Members; and secondly, to divide them into sections corresponding to the threefold objects of the Academy, so that the respective branches of Science, Polite Literature, and Antiquities, may be fairly represented among the Honorary Members.

During the past year an opportunity presented itself, from the visit of an intelligent Danish antiquary to this city, of opening a communication between the Academy and the Royal Museum of Northern Antiquities of Copenhagen, from which we may reasonably expect the most beneficial consequences. From the connexion which subsisted in ancient times between the Norsemen and this country, a comparison of Scandinavian and Irish antiquities has long been a great desideratum. The Academy, therefore, in accordance with the recommendation of Council, requested Mr. Worsaae to be the bearer of some drawings of the objects which seemed most likely to be interesting to Northern antiquarians in our Collection, to be presented, in the name of the Academy, to the Royal Museum of Copenhagen. They selected also, for the same purpose, under the superintendence of the Committee of Antiquities, a few duplicates from the Museum, which, it is hoped, may be regarded at Copenhagen as worthy of a place in the Royal Museum. They will, at all events, serve as a testimony of our good-will, and as an expression of our desire to establish a friendly intercourse between the learned men of two countries, whose early history was once so closely and so singularly united.

During the past year the Academy has to lament the death of the following Members :

Abraham Palmer, Esq.,	elected 1838.
George Digges La Touche, Esq.,	„ 1838.
Goddard Richards, Esq.,	„ 1843.
Maxwell M'Master, Esq.,	„ 1844.

The death of George Downes, Esq., also occurred during the year. He died on Sunday, August 23, 1846 ; and although, from the state of his health, he had, a short time before, ceased to be a Member of the Academy, the Council cannot refrain from paying this brief tribute to his memory. His attainments in Polite Literature were of a high order ; and his extensive knowledge of the northern lan-

guages was favourably displayed in his valuable paper on the Norse Geography of Ireland, which has appeared in the Transactions of the Academy.

Thomas Moore, Esq., the distinguished Lyric Poet of Ireland, a gentleman whose name is too well known to need any eulogy on this occasion, was the only Honorary Member elected during the past year.

The Academy has also been increased by the election of twenty-six ordinary Members, whose names are as follows :

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| 1. John Alcorn, Esq. | 15. William Brooke, Esq. |
| 2. Abraham W. Baker, Esq. | 16. D. J. Corrigan, M. D. |
| 3. Philip Bevan, M. D. | 17. Leonard Dobbin, Esq. |
| 4. J. O. Curran, M. D. | 18. Michael Donovan, Esq. |
| 5. Matthew D'Arcy, Esq. | 19. Charles Haliday, Esq. |
| 6. James Birch Kennedy, Esq. | 20. W. Neilson Hancock, Esq. |
| 7. M. H. Stapleton, M. B. | 21. John Kells Ingram, Esq. |
| 8. Hon. and Rev. W. Wingfield. | 22. Charles P. M'Donnell, Esq. |
| 9. John Aldridge, Esq. | 23. Right Hon. Louis Perrin, Jus- |
| 10. George Lefroy, Esq. | tice, Queen's Bench. |
| 11. Thomas John Beasly, Esq. | 24. Frederick John Sidney, Esq. |
| 12. Thomas Percy Boyd, Esq. | 25. Rev. Henry Tibbs. |
| 13. Rev. Robert J. M'Ghee. | 26. John O'Donovan, Esq. |
| 14. Rev. William Reeves, M. B. | |

It was resolved, that the Report of the Council be adopted, and printed in the Proceedings.

The ballot for the annual election having closed, the Scrutineers reported that the following Gentlemen were elected Officers and Council for the ensuing year :

President.—Rev. Humphrey Lloyd, D. D.

Treasurer.—Robert Ball, Esq.

Secretary to the Academy.—Rev. James H. Todd, D. D.

Secretary to the Council.—Rev. Charles Graves, A. M.

Secretary of Foreign Correspondence.—Rev. Samuel Butcher, A. M.